



Wave photo by Paul McFee

Cascade Springs visitor center is an oasis in a sea of blackened forest. The Cascade Springs fire began as a controlled burn on Sept. 23. The fire quickly blazed out of control, consuming 8000 acres over a week long period.

When the Smoke Clears

10-8-03

BY TISH DAHMEN

Wave Editor

One week after a prescribed burn blazed out of control consuming 8000 acres, Heber Valley residents are still shaking their heads over the blackened hillsides.

The controlled burn turned wildland fire came too close for comfort for many citizens who lived through the 1990 wildfire which claimed two lives and burned 18 homes. "It definitely brought back memories," said one Midway resident.

The two men who died fighting the 1990 fire were Ralph Broadhead and Blake Wright, both of Heber City. The two were family men and well liked in the Heber Valley community.

Wasatch County Councilman Bill Young, who is call-

ing for a full, public accounting of last week's Cascade Springs II fire, said he was a close friend to "one of the men who lost their lives in that fire. This is an emotional issue for us."

Although no homes, structures, or lives were threatened in the Cascade Springs II fire, it took a week and more than 420 firefighters and seven helicopters to contain. The cost of suppression is expected to exceed \$1.6 million.

To combat the wave of public sentiment against the Forest Service, Forest Service officials and public relations staff are working to assure residents they'll see benefits from the fire.

"In general, this was a really good burn," said Bekee Megown, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She is also one of many people assem-

bled to assess the fire's impact on the area.

"I think the vegetation will come back really good next year. There was a lot of seed source left and much of the area will be able to seed itself."

Megown is part of the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team activated Sept. 26. The 15-member team is made up of field specialists from archeologists to soil scientists to botanists.

In seven days, the team assesses the burn area. They then prepare a plan for emergency treatment to restore the burned area.

Megown said the team has already identified areas that will need straw wattle and silt fences to prevent erosion. The team is also recommending reseeding certain burn

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Another important contribution to the shift in power inside the WTO is the reality of ten years of trade deregulation. On the basis of computer projections, the poorer countries were convinced that signing away their right to regulate imports and exports would miraculously turn into rapid economic growth and the transformation of their societies into something along the lines of the United States, or at least Singapore or Korea. Reality now rules. Most countries have gone backwards as a result of the last round of trade talks while the worst of the unfair trade practices, like the dumping of agricultural products by U.S.-based grain companies, has significantly increased.

Fair trade, on the other hand, greatly benefits these countries. Most fair trade-

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coffee producers, for example, find it possible for them to send their sons and daughters to school and to begin securing water, sewer, electricity, and the other basics of life.

Governments of poor nations no longer have the luxury of just hoping for the best. The reality of trade rules and

two articles were published about the North School project and was unable to comment about the almost \$4 million dollar renovation.

First of all I would like to thank Tish and the editing staff for having the courage to report on what some readers may view as controversial. I know it was difficult to expose a less than perfect situation created by past elected officials. I also know what type of reaction this may cause because the members of the citizen's committee have been subjected to an array of responses.

Yet, as the only source of local news, I feel it is *The Wave's* responsibility, much like I feel it is my responsibility as a taxpayer to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions and the irresponsible spending of our tax dollars.

I have tried to get answers since August of 2002, but currently cannot see how the past school board decided to go forth with a renovation of the North School instead of building the proposed \$400,000 new district office. If we look at this numerically, there are about 15,000 people in Wasatch County, so about 8,000 of those are considered taxpayers - If you averaged the North School bill of \$4 million out equally, that would be a bill to each taxpayer of \$500! With a lawsuit pending and the project still incomplete, that bill may increase.

When we elect officials we pledge our support to them, we promise to help them make our community a better place to live. As those officials take office they pledge to do the same and they take an enormous responsibility of answering questions and concerns of those that elect them.

To this date, my questions and concerns have not been answered. And, although those officials are no longer in office, I am simply asking for an explanation of how, in an economically trying time, a \$4 million decision was made without asking the citizens first?

Finally, I would like to make it perfectly clear that I do not hold the current school board members or the superintendent responsible in any way for the North School "economic black hole." I realize that they were left a myriad of problems and feel they have done a courageous job and greatly appreciate their efforts on behalf of our students.

I feel once the past problems are solved this school board of responsible men and women will make Wasatch County a better place for its students.

Deb Anderson
Heber City

Dam News

Editor: The other day while stuck in traffic waiting for the road to open